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Security Council

Fiftieth Year

Provisional

3592nd Meeting

Friday, 10 November 1995, 11.45 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Al-Khussaiby	(Oman)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cárdenas
	Botswana	Mr. Legwaila
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Czech Republic	Mr. Kovanda
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Germany	Mr. Eitel
	Honduras	Mr. Martinez Blanco
	Indonesia	Mr. Wisnumurti
	Italy	Mr. Fulci
	Nigeria	Mr. Ayewah
	Russian Federation	Mr. Fedotov
	Rwanda	Mr. Bakuramutsa
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mrs. Albright

Agenda

The situation in Liberia

Thirteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (S/1995/881 and Add.1)

95-86606 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Liberia

Thirteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (S/1995/881 and Add.1)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Liberia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Bull (Liberia) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the thirteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia, documents S/1995/881 and S/1995/881/Add.1.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1995/923, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

The first speaker is the representative of Liberia, on whom I now call.

Mr. Bull (Liberia): The delegation of Liberia warmly congratulates you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of November.

We pay deserved tribute to your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari, for his effective leadership of the Council last month. He has served Africa's cause, and that of the international community, with dedication and efficiency, and has remained a strong advocate of the need for continued United Nations support for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) peace process in Liberia, in which his country, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, remains one of the preeminent actors. The Liberian people will always be indebted to our African brothers for their sacrifice and for their commitment to a peaceful resolution of the civil conflict in Liberia.

For nearly six years the international community has witnessed a human tragedy in Liberia. Today, there is renewed optimism that, following the signing of the Abuja Agreement on 19 August 1995 by the principal faction leaders and their subsequent installation in a six-member Council of State on 1 September, peace, which had eluded the Liberian people for over half a decade, is finally at hand. However, recent reports of cease-fire violations by some factions have raised some legitimate questions: Can the momentum in the peace process be sustained? Are the leaders of the factions truly committed to the peace process?

These issues have particular relevance given the past failure of the faction leaders to honour their undertakings. However, for the first time since the commencement of the conflict in 1989, the faction leaders have themselves taken on the responsibility of administering the affairs of Government by serving as members of the Council of State. The new leadership has publicly pledged its total commitment to the peace process and declared it to be irreversible. While deeds and not words alone will ultimately determine the outcome, we believe in the sincerity of the Liberian leaders, who have heard and should respect the clarion call of the Liberian people to end the senseless war and allow them to rebuild their lives in an environment of peace, democratic governance and the rule of law.

With regard to sustaining the momentum in the peace process, it is my delegation's firm belief that the support of the international community is indispensable and must complement the efforts of the Liberian people in order to facilitate the achievement of this important objective.

In this connection we commend the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his thirteenth progress report on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) in document S/1995/881 of 23

October 1995. We are grateful to him for his commitment to and support for the peace process. We also express our appreciation to his Special Representative, Ambassador Anthony Nyakyi, and to all of the relevant United Nations bodies which continue actively to provide invaluable assistance for the realization of peace in Liberia and in meeting the humanitarian needs of the many victims of the conflict.

My delegation fully endorses the report of the Secretary-General, which reaffirms the urgent need for international support to assist the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its implementing arm, the ECOWAS cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), fully to achieve its mandate, without which the sustainability of the momentum in the peace process may be adversely affected.

The report also identifies other areas of need in Liberia, including that for providing humanitarian assistance to victims, the repatriation of Liberian refugees and their resettlement, the demobilization and reintegration of combatants into civil society, and assistance to law enforcement and the judiciary as well as to the electoral process.

The Secretary-General's recommendations on a new mandate and concept of operations for UNOMIL are fully endorsed by my Government. It is our firm belief that the implementation of the mandate will ensure more effective coordination between UNOMIL and ECOMOG as they discharge their respective duties.

The Government and people of Liberia have now commenced the long but inevitable march towards the disarming and demobilization of combatants and their reintegration, the reconstruction of the country and its economy, the restoration of peace, reconciliation and democratic rule, and the holding of internationally supervised elections in August next year.

Permit me to reiterate my Government's profound gratitude to all Member States of the Organization as well as to governmental and non-governmental organizations which have offered assistance to Liberia since the commencement of the civil crisis in December 1989.

As the Liberian people resolutely march towards a better future, we need the continued support of the international community if our legitimate aspirations are to be realized. The Liberian people are determined to rebuild their lives, and they appeal for your assistance. Liberia will again become a respected and active Member of this Organization, whose sterling principles have continued to stand the test of time, as evidenced by our observance a few weeks ago of the historic fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The delegation of Liberia fully supports the draft resolution before the Council and requests its unanimous adoption. The Liberian delegation also regrets that the Council could not have adopted the draft resolution before today, given the importance of its full implementation to the peace process in Liberia.

The President: I thank the representative of Liberia for his kind words addressed to me.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first call upon those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Ayewah (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and timely report on the situation in Liberia (S/1995/881). In our view, his report represents a fair assessment of developments on the ground in Liberia since the Council adopted resolution 1014 (1995), on 15 September. The momentum for peace in Liberia is greater today than at any other time since the war began in 1989, and now that the peace process in Liberia has entered a new and crucial phase a concrete expression of international support is required as a matter of urgency.

The recent positive developments, particularly since the signing of the Abuja Agreement in August this year, have given my Government cause to be optimistic. Over the past two months, the Liberian parties have re-established a cease-fire, installed a Council of State and shown a greater willingness to take concrete steps towards the restoration of peace and stability in their country. These are remarkable achievements and, as a result, a real opportunity now exists for ensuring that the peace process in Liberia becomes irreversible. These encouraging signs in the peace process need to be highlighted.

At the same time, we are concerned about some negative actions of the parties, particularly the cease-fire violations and the slow progress of disengagement of forces, as well as delays in removing checkpoints in certain areas. We have drawn this to the attention of the Liberian parties and urged them to take immediate steps to remove these obstacles.

We also realize that the true test of the commitment of the parties to peace lies ahead, when the process of the assembly, disarmament and demobilization of over 60,000 combatants commences. While the main responsibility for the implementation of the peace agreement rests with the Liberian parties, the critical phase of disarmament and demobilization requires the assistance and support of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) and all the leaders of the region.

In this regard, Nigeria has decided to increase its contingent in ECOMOG by two battalions and we have disbursed additional funds for the procurement of communications and other vital equipment for ECOMOG. None the less, our efforts in the region need to be supplemented by those of the international community to provide ECOMOG with the logistical support, assistance in transportation and communications equipment and fuel that will enable it to discharge its functions effectively. In this regard, we can only recall that, for UNOMIL to discharge its functions, ECOMOG must be in a position effectively to undertake its own primary assignment.

It is in this connection that we thank the Secretary-General for organizing the recent Conference on Assistance to Liberia. We are encouraged by the initial response to the appeal and we look forward to a timely disbursement of those commitments, so that the momentum so generated does not fizzle out owing to a long delay between the pledges and actual disbursement.

We support the proposed adjustment to the mandate of UNOMIL as well as its new concept of operations. The recommendations and proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General have taken account of the evolution of the problem in Liberia and the current realities, which are very different from what they were at the time of the signing of the Cotonou Agreement. The Secretary-General's proposals and recommendations which we are about to approve through this draft resolution would, in our view, enhance the ability of UNOMIL effectively to complement ECOMOG in the peace process.

My delegation agrees with the conclusion in the Secretary-General's report that it is ultimately the people and leaders of Liberia who must give peace a chance. It is also true, however, that, because of the delicate and positive stage of the peace process in that country, the international community should give peace a chance by a renewed determination to help Liberians help themselves.

Mr. Legwaila (Botswana): The people of Liberia have experienced more than two months of relative peace. This is a short period of time, given the tremendous suffering the Liberians have had to endure over the past six years. And yet, 75 days of peace, after so many years of death and destruction, represent a period of hope and promise — the hope for peace and the promise of a better tomorrow. This is the period for which the people of Liberia have yearned all these years. We share with them the joy of waking up to a day without the staccato of machine-guns and the loss of innocent lives.

Botswana welcomes the positive developments in Liberia and hopes that the parties and political leaders of that country will move expeditiously to consolidate the peace process and establish a firm foundation for stability and national reconciliation. The efforts that have been made by the Liberian National Transitional Government are encouraging. We urge it to continue its commitment to the implementation of the Abuja Agreement, as it represents the only hope so far for peace in that war-torn country. The emergent peace process in Liberia requires of the members of the Council of State a demonstration of a willingness and a readiness for compromise and pragmatism in addressing priority issues. The momentum for peace must not be lost.

The Liberian political leaders have a primary responsibility to ensure that the fighters under their command comply with the Abuja Agreement. In this regard, the disengagement, disarmament and demobilization of the combatants are among the areas that demand their urgent attention. While it is essential that the Council of State assume overall authority in the peace process, it is equally important that the members of the Council should not lose command of their fighters. They still have a major responsibility to ensure that the fighters report to the assembly points. We are concerned by indications, cited in paragraph 19 of the Secretary-General's report, that there is:

> "an apparent weakening in the command structure within some of the factions". (*S/1995/881, para. 19*)

It would not be in the interests of the peace process to allow this situation to get out of control.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) has a vital role to play in the implementation of the cease-fire and the disarmament and demobilization of the combatants. The pivotal contribution of ECOWAS member States to bringing about the Abuja Agreement and their continued determination to ensure its successful implementation are admirable. In operative paragraph 7 of the draft resolution before us Member States are urged to demonstrate their support for peace in Liberia in practical terms. The international community is called upon to provide the necessary financial and logistical support to ECOMOG to enable it to carry out its mandate. The time has come for the international community to assume its responsibilities in the restoration of peace in Liberia.

The Secretary-General correctly points out in the report before the Council that the demobilization and reintegration of the combatants into the mainstream of civil society are essential if the peace process is to succeed. The United Nations has the responsibility to ensure that the gains that have been made are not reversed by the lack of resources for demobilization. Botswana fully supports the provision of resources for the demobilization under the assessed budget. The demobilization process is too important to be left to voluntary contributions, which may not be disbursed in a timely manner.

The international community is fully aware of the needs of the Liberian people. The Conference on Assistance to Liberia, held on 27 October 1995, offered an opportunity to reassess the sum total of the problems facing Liberia today. The humanitarian needs of 700,000 displaced persons and over 700,000 refugees are enormous. The return and resettlement of the refugees and displaced persons are vital to any comprehensive and durable peace. The recovery and rehabilitation of the Liberian national economy is a major challenge, which the people of Liberia cannot tackle alone.

Subparagraphs (a) to (g) of operative paragraph 2 clearly outline the adjusted mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL). The successful implementation of the mandate will depend to a large extent on the cooperation of the Liberian parties with ECOMOG and UNOMIL, whose presence should be seen as one creating an atmosphere in which the Liberians themselves can work with each other to rebuild their war-ravaged country. The people of Liberia should understand that the continued provision of assistance by the international community is contingent upon their demonstrated consistency in working towards the attainment of national reconciliation and lasting peace.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): Since the signing of the Abuja Agreement, the peace process in Liberia has continued to move in a positive direction, thanks to the international community's assistance and promotion, particularly that of such neighbouring countries as Nigeria and Ghana. Its new Council of State has started to operate and has taken some effective measures for the restoration and maintenance of stability in the country. The re-establishment of the country's judicial system has also been placed on the agenda. The Chinese delegation welcomes these positive developments.

The various parties in Liberia have taken important steps in the peace process. However, we have noted that they still need to make unremitting efforts to achieve lasting peace, particularly by speeding up the disengagement and disarmament of their forces. So far, only 133 out of the 60,000 combatants to be disarmed have laid down their arms and returned to their native land. The work to be done in this regard therefore remains very arduous. At the same time, there are still violations of the cease-fire from time to time. We wish to express our deep concern over the fact that all this might constitute a stumbling-block to peace in Liberia.

After many years of conflict, the day of lasting peace has now dawned in Liberia. This is by no means an easy achievement. The various parties in Liberia should cherish it deeply and seize the current favourable opportunity to continue to work hard to this end. The Secretary-General particularly points out in his report that the disarmament and demobilization of combatants is a key issue in the Liberian peace process. We fully share this view, and we believe that an early completion of that task will not only help maintain the momentum of the peace process, but, more importantly, provide basic conditions for national reconciliation in the country. Therefore, the Security Council should urge the conflicting parties concerned to demonstrate political good will, resolve their differences and, taking into account the fundamental interests of the Liberian people, take the necessary actions to accomplish this task at an early date.

We have always held that the Security Council should treat the conflicts in Africa the same as it does those in other regions, support the just demands of African countries and peoples and refrain from adopting double standards in considering peace-keeping operations in Africa.

The Chinese Government and people will, as always, support the peace process in Liberia and the efforts made by the international community and the Economic Community of West African States for the settlement of the Liberian question. On the basis of this position, China will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Cárdenas (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Argentine Republic will vote in favour of the draft resolution now before the Council, since we believe that the international community must actively support the opportunities for peace now emerging in Liberia and redouble its efforts to contribute to the consolidation of the peace agreements reached by the Liberian parties.

While we know that on several occasions in the past the parties have reached an agreement only to set it aside, unimplemented, soon after, we believe that this time the underlying commitment is firm and that peace is a more certain prospect. This position is supported by what we see as a substantive change in attitude by the parties, which, thank God, seem more determined than ever to take specific steps to restore peace and stability in their country, as well as by the consistent political advances they have achieved.

We cannot fail to mention the positive and praiseworthy role played by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and especially the Governments of Ghana and Nigeria, in the creation of these new circumstances.

This is why my delegation agrees with the revision of the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) proposed by the Secretary-General and with the increase in the number of military observers to 160. However, the new concept of UNOMIL's operations can be implemented only if the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) is fully operational, since ECOMOG is entrusted with guaranteeing the security of UNOMIL's observers and civilian personnel. We therefore hope that with the financial and logistical support of the international community ECOMOG will, as soon as possible, be able to discharge its mandate properly. This will also guarantee the implementation of the various military aspects of the agreements and make it possible to deliver humanitarian assistance to people in need, the importance of which we wish to stress.

In our view, in this new stage it will be necessary to strengthen contacts and coordination between UNOMIL and ECOMOG at all levels in order to ensure that the tasks are carried out in a better coordinated, and therefore more efficient, manner.

We wish to place special emphasis on the importance of the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants, which should be concluded by the end of next January. However, we believe that for those processes to be truly effective they must be accompanied by realistic programmes envisaging the reintegration of former combatants into the normal life of civil society and providing them with alternative means of livelihood.

We wish to recall the essential responsibility of the Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG) for respecting and ensuring respect for the legal status of the international personnel and for guaranteeing at all times their full freedom of movement and freedom of access.

We trust that the various factions, continuing to conduct themselves with prudence and calm, will be able to take advantage of and consolidate this new opportunity by implementing without delay the agreements already reached, which, step by step, should lead to presidential and legislative elections in August of 1996. This is the road agreed upon, and at its end we shall find reconciliation.

Mr. Wisnumurti (Indonesia): It is indeed a great pleasure for my delegation to associate itself with the expressions of appreciation to the Secretary-General for his informative report (S/1995/881) of 23 October 1995, the thirteenth in a series of progress reports on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL).

We wish also to express our gratitude to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Anthony Nyakyi, and to the leaders of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), for the continuing endeavours they have made towards the restoration of peace, security and stability in Liberia.

In the same vein, we commend the Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG) and the

personnel of UNOMIL for their efforts to end the six years of suffering and devastation inflicted on the Liberian people.

The Indonesian delegation, like other delegations, is very much encouraged to note from the report the progress made by the Liberian parties that demonstrates their determination, now stronger than ever before, to take tangible steps towards the restoration of peace and stability in their country. Such positive developments — manifested in the formation of a Cabinet, appointments to the Supreme Court, the reconstitution of the Ad Hoc Elections Commission and the setting up of a committee to prepare a status-of-forces agreement between the LNTG and ECOWAS — are most welcome to my delegation.

We are also gratified to note that the LNTG has expressed its desire to ensure the effective implementation of the Abuja Agreement, including disarmament and demobilization of combatants. The recent agreement reached by the Liberian parties themselves on a timetable for implementing the peace process is indeed a welcome development. We view as encouraging the LNTG's commitment to continuing to cooperate closely with the Liberian faction leaders, the personnel of ECOWAS and UNOMIL, and with the international community.

Against this positive backdrop, the Council must seize the opportunity that now exists to bring to an end the civil war, which has ravaged Liberia for far too long. We therefore feel that, taking into account the new atmosphere prevailing in the country, the momentum gained since the signing of the Abuja Agreement deserves our strong support and should continue to be encouraged and sustained by the international community. To this end, it is not only essential for UNOMIL to maintain its presence in the country, it is also imperative, if UNOMIL is to be assisted in securing its stated objectives, for it to be provided with a clear mandate that reflects these changing conditions.

We therefore fully support the adjusted mandate of UNOMIL as contained in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution now before us.

In this connection, the Indonesian delegation considers it of utmost importance, if UNOMIL is to be effective in discharging its task, for there to be close cooperation and enhanced coordination with the LNTG, ECOMOG and all the Liberian parties. Enhanced coordination and closer cooperation would enable UNOMIL to overcome and resolve the many challenges still being encountered, such as violations of the cease-fire, harassment of civilians and looting of their property.

We are also concerned that the process of the disengagement of forces and disarmament, which are the elements most critical to the peace process, have encountered some delays. The lack of coordination in repatriating refugees and resettling internally displaced persons, and in reintegrating combatants into civilian life, also requires rectification.

We are convinced that effective and close cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations can be attained, as is shown by the success stories in Cambodia, El Salvador and Mozambique.

In conclusion, my delegation, in light of these developments, will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us today. We believe it reflects a well-balanced approach for expediting a speedy resolution to this tragic conflict — that has crippled the region for far too long — while taking into consideration the current reality of the situation. The new spirit of cooperation on the part of the Liberian parties presents a unique opportunity to make real progress in resolving these difficult issues. We therefore believe that the adoption of this resolution is critical for carrying the peace process forward.

While the effective implementation of this draft resolution lies in the hands of the Liberian parties themselves, assistance from the international community is also essential. It is in this context that my delegation welcomes the commitments made by many Member States during the Conference on Assistance to Liberia recently convened by the Secretary-General here in New York, and hopes that their pledged assistance will be disbursed in a timely manner so that an end can be put to this tragic chapter in Liberia's history.

Mr. Martínez-Blanco (Honduras) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his thirteenth progress report on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), which contains his recommendations on the new mandate and operational concept for UNOMIL based on the experience acquired since UNOMIL's establishment by the Security Council under resolution 866 (1993) of 22 September 1993.

The signing of the Abuja Agreement in August this year gave a new impetus to the Liberian peace process as

it made possible the entry into force of the cease-fire and the installation of the Council of State. However, we believe that there has not been full compliance with the timetable for applying the Abuja Agreement. True, the cease-fire in Liberia has been re-established, but it is neither complete nor completely effective given that sporadic confrontations between rival forces of the United Liberation for Democracy in Liberia and the National Patriotic Front continue. Nor were the complete disengagement of the opposing factions and the dismantling of all their checkpoints complete by the dates set out in the timetable.

The commitment by the Liberian factions to re-establishing peace and stability in their country must be demonstrated by their laying down their arms and withdrawing their combatants from all areas in which confrontations might occur, and by their eliminating all their checkpoints, as provided for under the Abuja Agreement. Disarmament and demobilization are key elements for the peace process and for national reconstruction, and the Liberian parties must therefore abide faithfully by the agreements they have put their names to.

My delegation does recognize, however, that the political situation in Liberia has improved substantially. The actions of the Council of State to ensure that the Transitional Government is effective have all been very positive. The formation of a Cabinet and the appointments to the Supreme Court; the impending re-establishment of local governmental institutions and of the judicial system throughout the country; the joint preparations with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for a status-of-forces agreement; and, in general, the recognition by the National Transitional Government that it is up to the Transitional Government itself to ensure the effective implementation of the Abuja Agreement, including the disarmament and demobilization of combatants — these are all events that we welcome with great satisfaction.

It is also encouraging that the Vice-Presidents of the Liberian National Transition Government have indicated to the Secretary-General's Special Representative that the Government wishes to work closely with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) and the international community to achieve implementation of the Abuja Agreement. This is an important decision, for ECOWAS has played, and is still playing, an important role in the peace process in Liberia; and the work of the Cease-fire Monitoring Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG) is essential as a means of helping the Government to implement the provisions of the Cotonou Agreement and the other two complementary agreements — those of Akosombo and Accra.

In Liberia, ECOMOG and UNOMIL still have to carry out very important tasks in connection with the implementation and monitoring of the Abuja Agreement. The success of the activities will depend on ECOMOG's having sufficient resources to fulfil its functions. We hope that the outcome of the Conference on Assistance to Liberia, which was held here recently, will contribute significantly to the peace process.

My delegation agrees with the Secretary-General's recommendations, contained in paragraphs 23 and 72 of his report, on adjusting the mandate of UNOMIL and with those on the new concept of its operations, as described in paragraphs 24 to 34. Accordingly, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Council, which we believe will be a valuable contribution to the peace process in Liberia. However, we repeat that only respect for faithful compliance with the agreements arrived at and a firm resolve on the part of the Liberian Transition Government and the leaders of the Liberian factions will make it possible for that country to move along the road to peace and national reconciliation.

Mr. Kovanda (Czech Republic): We speak here today not only as a member of the Security Council but also as a participant in the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) — the only European participant and, apart from China, the only participant among Council members. Thus, we feel a special responsibility for the careful and realistic formulation of the mandate of UNOMIL.

We have seen in other peace-keeping operations the difficulties that follow from a fuzzy mandate, and last year our own men had to escape danger in Liberia under rather dramatic circumstances. But political developments have led to a change in circumstances, and that is what we are reacting to here. I shall not comment on the new conditions, as we have done so in this Chamber on a previous occasion. I do, however, wish to point out that the way ahead will not be problem-free — certainly not on the military side.

The disengagement, assembly and demobilization of combatants and their reintegration into civilian life will

not proceed without hitches. Experience from Mozambique, which continues to impress us, demonstrates several flashpoints.

First, there is the importance of providing combatants with an incentive to come out of the bush and allow themselves to be disarmed. In Mozambique, this incentive took the form of a guaranteed income for a certain period. In Liberia, we are more or less relying on combatants being tired of war and on their being sufficiently controlled by their commanders.

Secondly, there is the importance of rapid processing of combatants once they are on assembly sites. A prolonged stay, especially if in miserable conditions, leads not only to demoralization but, worse — as in Mozambique — to revolt and mutinies.

Thirdly, there is the importance of effective control of weapons. In Mozambique, large quantities of rusty, useless, non-functioning weapons were turned in early in the process, the good stuff being withheld. Parallel to that, every now and then a hidden cache of arms was discovered.

Fourthly, there is the importance of the speedy and effective reintegration of combatants into civilian life. Any delays will, in conjunction with the proliferation of arms, lead to banditry. The Secretary-General clearly highlights this danger in paragraph 47 of his report, but no clear countermeasures are envisaged.

Through the Cease-fire Monitoring Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG), African States have borne the brunt of support for peace in Liberia. Frankly, we are therefore doubly surprised by their low turnout here today. We note, however, that, in proportion to the populations of Liberia and Mozambique, ECOMOG is to be 10 times as strong as the United Nations Operation in Mozambique was. We have heard no satisfactory explanation of this difference in strength between the two forces. Needless to say, the size of ECOMOG has an immediate bearing on the volume of financial, logistical and other assistance that Member States are urged, in paragraph 7 of the draft resolution, to provide.

Having highlighted several potential problems of the coming period, my delegation is nevertheless satisfied that the UNOMIL mandate for the current conditions is outlined fairly clearly and cleanly. We shall therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Sir John Weston (United Kingdom): The British delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Liberia and supports his recommendations for an adjustment of the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia to reflect the Abuja Agreement. The adoption of this draft resolution should help to maintain the momentum of the peace process.

The challenges and difficulties that lie ahead cannot be underestimated, but the willingness of the factions to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict, as demonstrated by the Abuja Agreement, provides encouragement. The role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) — in particular, that of its Chairman, President Rawlings — has been crucial to this new impetus for peace.

At the United Nations Conference on Assistance to Liberia, held on 27 October, the United Kingdom contributed £5 million to the United Nations inter-agency appeal for Liberia and £50,000 for communications equipment for the additional Ghanaian battalion to be deployed with the ECOWAS cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), as well as pledging military training assistance for Ghanaian armed forces. We urge others to provide assistance to ECOMOG to enable it to carry out its mandate. It is clear that without the necessary resources ECOMOG will not be able to carry out the tasks assigned to it under the Abuja Agreement.

The Secretary-General's report gives grounds for cautious optimism, but it also notes serious violations of the cease-fire and a worrying disinclination, on the part of some factions, to disengage forces and begin the process of demobilization and reintegration into civilian society. The international community needs to be reassured that, this time, the factions mean what they say.

In this draft resolution, as in previous resolutions, the Security Council is demonstrating its willingness to help the Liberians to help themselves. This conflict has continued for too long. The Liberian people and their neighbours in the region who have been affected by the conflict have suffered for too long. It is now up to Liberian parties to demonstrate their full commitment to the peace process. The continued support of the international community depends on this.

I should like to add a footnote. All debates such as the one in which we are now engaged take place in the context of the general objective of good governance and

respect for human rights, in Africa as elsewhere. In this regard, it is with great regret that the British Government has just learned, via a Reuters report quoting the News Agency of Nigeria, that, despite widespread high-level appeals for clemency, including one by the British Prime Minister at the ongoing Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Auckland, Ken Sara-wiwa and eight other minority rights activists condemned to death by the Nigerian authorities were executed by hanging today at Port Harcourt Prison in south-eastern Nigeria. In London, the British Government has stated that it is appalled at this callous act. In Auckland, the British Prime Minister is in close contact with his colleagues about further steps.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): Only a few months ago, the hopes for a positive conclusion to the peace process in Liberia seemed minimal. The numerous agreements signed by the factions were not respected; nine times a general cease-fire was agreed upon, and nine times it was violated. The sufferings of the civilian population were aggravated by the fact that it was impossible for humanitarian agencies to intervene in the country. The international community seemed powerless before the parties' stubborn insistence continuing the conflict.

Today we are facing a completely different picture. The desire for peace seems to have finally prevailed over the logic of war. Dialogue has replaced weapons. This is what the Security Council had all along repeatedly called for. It is thus with great, sincere satisfaction that we note that Liberia is finally moving towards peace.

We must underline the essential role of the African countries in the peace process. Despite significant financial obstacles, they persevered in keeping the contingent of ECOMOG, the Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in the country. The mediation of ECOWAS, with the tireless encouragement of the President of Ghana, Jerry Rawlings, was never interrupted, even at the most difficult moments in the negotiation. Finally, the success of the final, crucial phase of the negotiation was made possible by Nigeria's offer to host the peace talks, which led to the Abuja Agreement.

Moreover, we cannot forget that the firm stance of the Security Council made it possible to convey to the factions in conflict that it would not be possible for the international community to continue its support without a true, sincere, definite commitment by the parties to achieving peace.

Today the Council is about to adopt a draft resolution that takes note of these positive developments. The draft resolution lays the foundation for renewed international support for the peace process and for the normalization of Liberia. We fully share its goals. Like other donor countries, we will carefully assess Liberia's immediate needs, especially from a humanitarian point of view.

We cannot fail to mention that, in the delicate phase the country is going through, all the Liberian parties, particularly the Council of State and the Liberian National Transitional Government, must show their true, sincere commitment to peace. They must strictly abide by the terms of the Abuja Agreement, in particular with regard to the disengagement, disarmament and demobilization of their forces. Let us not forget that the end of the conflict depends on the success of these fundamental operations. Peace in Liberia, which today seems closer than ever, is first and foremost the responsibility of the Liberians themselves.

I must add to the "footnote" of our colleague from the United Kingdom in his statement of a few moments ago. I was simply shocked — I was appalled — by the news the representative of the United Kingdom told us of the execution in Nigeria today of nine people, of nine minority rights activists. I think members will recall the battle that Italy waged last year in the General Assembly against the death penalty — against the death penalty in general, because we think it is inhuman. The Council can therefore imagine the feelings of the delegation I head, we have no information other than what we have just heard. Members can imagine our feeling of shock, of horror, to hear that people have been hanged because they defended their ideas and their ideals.

Let me say very strongly, very loudly and very clearly: "You can hang people, but you can never hang ideas and ideals".

The President: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1995/923.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Botswana, China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Nigeria, Oman, Russian Federation, Rwanda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1020 (1995).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): In recent months there have been crucial developments in Liberia. The signing of the Abuja Agreement was an essential step in the return to peace in Liberia. In that agreement the parties agreed to implement the peace process according to a timetable agreed upon by all. The establishment of a cease-fire and the installation of the Council of State were the first positive steps under the Agreement.

We all know that the hardest tasks remain to be done. The disarmament of troops and their cantonment in assembly sites, and the reintegration of former combatants are elements essential for the success of the entire process. To ensure this success, several conditions must be met.

First of all, peace can return only if the factions fully abide by the commitments they undertook at Abuja. We are therefore disturbed at cease-fire violations noted recently and at delays with respect to the disengagement of forces. It is understandable that after five years of war it will not be easy to restore trust. Yet everything possible must be done to ensure that yesterday's rivalries are overcome. The Liberian National Transitional Government has a special responsibility in this area.

Secondly, it is necessary for the United Nations to continue, along with the Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States, to support the completion of the peace process. The peace agreements provide for a sharing of tasks between the United Nations and the African force. The resolution we have just adopted — which we would have liked to adopt sooner — is aimed precisely at clarifying this division of tasks with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the personnel on the ground who will ensure a return to peace. That is why the French delegation voted in favour of the resolution.

Finally, the international community must continue to support those who are working for peace in Liberia. Here, the convening by the Secretary-General of the Conference on Assistance to Liberia, held in New York on 27 October, was a major initiative. A number of countries, including France, clearly stated their intention to provide assistance to Liberia. Liberia must be given the means to succeed; and additional Member States must therefore be encouraged to join those countries already committed to a solution to the conflict in this African country.

The civil war that has raged in Liberia for over five years now has had catastrophic consequences in both human and economic terms. The Abuja Agreement is designed not only to restore peace in Liberia but also to enable 1.5 million refugees and displaced persons to return home and in due course to rebuild the country, which has been completely ravaged.

The French delegation hopes that all those involved that have means available to them in these areas — States, international organizations and especially international financial organizations — will demonstrate generosity and responsibility in order to enable not only this country but this entire region of Africa to return to stability and the path of progress. The French Government is prepared to participate actively in this undertaking, which must succeed.

I welcomed the fact that this important and decisive agreement was signed at Abuja, a name we had hoped would become synonymous with respect for human rights. We can only, therefore, express our alarm at the tragic reports mentioned by various speakers on the fate of the prisoners on whose behalf the European Union has expressed its concern, should those reports be verified.

Mr. Fedotov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Russian delegation wishes to reiterate its full support for United Nations actions directed at rendering practical assistance to a peace settlement in Liberia. The resolution the Security Council has just unanimously adopted on the new mandate and concept of operations for the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) is undoubtedly a clear confirmation of the international community's readiness to support, not only in words but in deeds, the efforts of the Liberian parties and the States members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to put an end to the six-year fratricidal war and restore peace to that country and stability to the entire region. We view the positive outcome of the international Conference on Assistance to Liberia, held at New York on 27 October, in the same light.

We commend the tireless efforts of the international community, and especially the African States, to put an end to the chaos and violence in Liberia. However, we

should like to underline once again — and this is made crystal clear in the Security Council resolution — that in the final analysis the success of a peaceful settlement in that country will hinge on the commitment to peace of the Liberian parties themselves and on their compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and the agreements among themselves entered into with the assistance of ECOWAS including the Abuja Agreement.

Of particular importance at the present crucial stage of settlement is the factor of confidence-building among the participants in the peace process. In this connection it is disturbing that reports continue to come in concerning violations of the cease-fire and hitches in the process of force disengagement. Such incidents are fraught with the risk of a resumption of conflict, and we find it timely that the resolution contains an appeal to the Liberian parties to avoid the recurrence of such incidents in the future and maintain the momentum of the peace process.

In view of the special nature of the United Nations operation in Liberia, where the United Nations is acting in support of the regional organization, ECOWAS, we deem exceptionally important the provision of the resolution that stresses the need for close contacts and enhanced coordination between UNOMIL and ECOMOG in their operational activities at all levels. We take the view that such action will foster the success of the peace process in Liberia and that the positive experience gained in that country through practical cooperation between the United Nations and the regional organization in the maintenance of international peace and security will prove useful for other peacemaking operations as well.

Mrs. Albright (United States of America): The resolution we have adopted today is another acknowledgement of the progress towards peace that is being made in Liberia. For too long the prospects for peaceful reconciliation in that poor country were bleak. But with the persevering help of the regional States, supported by the international community, a brighter future is now on the horizon. Today's resolution demonstrates the commitment of the international community to assist the Liberian people down the road towards that future.

My country believes that the peace process in Liberia is very important, not only for the people of Liberia, but also for the whole West African region. That is why my Government pledged $75 million at the recent Conference on Assistance to Liberia. An investment now in peace in Liberia will be returned a thousandfold in better and freer lives for the people of the region.

As you are all aware, my Government has carefully considered the Secretary-General's proposed adjustment to the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) and its revised concept of operations. We needed time to do so. Our sole aim has been to ensure that UNOMIL continues to play an appropriate role in helping to implement the peace programme.

Under the new concept of operations, UNOMIL will have a major role in the management of and financial responsibility for the demobilization process. The United States agrees that the demobilization of the tens of thousands of Liberian combatants is critical to the peace process. We recognize that this will be a complicated and difficult task to complete. We believe that international humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations can and must be brought into the peace process as soon as possible — not only because their expertise and resources will ease the burden on UNOMIL, but also to ensure that the entire process, from disarmament through demobilization to reintegration into society, is carried out in an efficient, speedy and coordinated manner.

In this context, we support the Secretary-General's intent to expand and strengthen coordination mechanisms, to appoint a United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for the United Nations agencies, and to support the efforts of the wider humanitarian community, including non-governmental, international and multilateral organizations. For our part, we are prepared to use some of the funds pledged at the 27 October Conference to help fund the demobilization-reintegration process. We will continue to look for ways to fund activities which will reduce the cost of UNOMIL. We urge other countries to support the peace process generously.

The peace process in Liberia cannot move forward unless the Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG), the Liberian factions and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) do their part. We, along with many other countries, are working hard to mobilize resources for logistical support of ECOMOG's deployment, a precondition for UNOMIL's own deployment and the actual start of the disarmament and demobilization process. But the LNTG, the Liberian factions and ECOMOG must do the maximum with the resources they now have to keep the process moving, and we trust that they are doing so. If ECOMOG does not deploy in

December, many combatants and civilians will lose faith in the peace process.

My Government looks forward to the Secretary-General's progress report on the situation in Liberia and the implementation of UNOMIL's adjusted mandate. We intend to work closely with the United Nations and UNOMIL to achieve an efficient and cost-effective implementation of the new mandate.

The people of Liberia have an opportunity now, with the support of the international community, to fashion a bright new peaceful future for themselves. We urge them to seize this opportunity and to become once more the shining symbol of freedom that is their heritage as the oldest democracy in Africa.

With today's vote we hope to see a movement towards democracy in Liberia, but it is impossible to talk about peace and democracy in Liberia without expressing my Government's outrage at the reports of the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other minority rights activists in Nigeria.

Their conviction was stunning in its absence of any modicum of due process under law. The unseemly haste of this reported step contravenes all values of the civilized world. The defendants were not given a fair and free trial and were not able to present witnesses or evidence. Presumably this is true, since the whole act — the condemnation to death and the executions — has in fact been reported by the Nigerian News Agency.

This heinous act offends our values and darkens our hope for democracy in the region. We particularly deplore this action, for it was taken despite the pleas of so many Governments, including my own. My Government is now urgently considering what further steps to take, including action by the Security Council.

Mr. Eitel (Germany): Germany voted in favour of this resolution giving the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) an enlarged mandate. We believe that this is necessary to enable UNOMIL to play an effective role in the further peace process. We wish to stress, however, that UNOMIL can be effective only with the full cooperation of all parties, the Liberian National Transitional Government and the Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The recent developments in Liberia lead us to be hopeful. The establishment of the Council of State and the implementation of a comprehensive cease-fire are important first steps to build on. Further concrete steps will have to follow. We look forward to the complete disengagement of the warring parties, creating the necessary conditions for the quartering of troops in assembly sites and for their disarmament and demobilization. Only under these conditions will UNOMIL be able to fulfil its mandate. We therefore call on the warring parties to make the Abuja Agreement the lasting foundation for a peace settlement in Liberia.

International assistance will be necessary to sustain the peace process, especially within the framework of the demobilization of the armed units, and to re-establish an economic foundation for Liberia's further development. The Conference on Assistance to Liberia, with its initial pledges, has shown that the international community is willing to do its share. Only if former combatants, refugees and internally displaced persons are able to earn a living within a functioning national economy can we hope for a permanent and peaceful settlement of the civil war. Humanitarian assistance, which should take into account the long-term needs of the country, will now, at this initial stage of the peace process, play a crucial role.

Further assistance, however, will also depend on the warring parties' providing credible proof of their sincere commitment to the peace process by abiding strictly by the Abuja Agreement. Only under this condition can continued international assistance for the peace process be maintained.

The present mandate of UNOMIL will expire on 31 January 1996. At that time, the Council will have to reconsider UNOMIL's options in Liberia in the light of progress made in the peace process. The next steps in the peace process should therefore be undertaken without delay. We hope that a lasting cease-fire will enable ECOMOG, even within its present means, to deploy rapidly throughout the country. Such urgent action seems to be required to maintain the momentum towards peace in Liberia. In accordance with this resolution, the United Nations and the member States of the Economic Community of West African States would thus continue their efforts towards peace in Liberia, setting an example of complementarity and cooperation.

At the beginning of today's meeting, we heard the Permanent Representative of Liberia praise the essential role played by Nigeria in fostering the peace process in

his country. It is therefore with even greater dismay that we have learned that, indeed, 10 minority leaders have today been hanged in Nigeria. Together with other Governments — for example, the Government of Italy — the German Government has worked for the worldwide abolition of the death penalty. We shall continue to do so.

If the shocking news I have just mentioned should prove to be correct, my delegation cannot but join those delegations that have preceded me in expressing their utter dismay over these executions.

Mr. Bakuramutsa (Rwanda) (*interpretation from French*): Allow me first of all to express my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, presiding over the Security Council this month. We have great confidence in your wisdom and experience, which will help us to achieve tangible results this month. During your presidency, we would ask you to use your influence to solve and eliminate as many as possible of the problems inscribed on our agenda, such as those of Liberia and Rwanda, and others. You will have the complete cooperation of my delegation.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Gambari of Nigeria for the excellent work he did during his presidency.

My delegation also takes this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his thirteenth report on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia.

My delegation welcomes the developments in the situation in Liberia, achieved as a result of the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which, through its Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), has succeeded in maintaining stability and safeguarding the State of Liberia, despite the paucity of means available to it. That is why my delegation is proud to congratulate the Heads of State of the Economic Community of West African States and ECOMOG on their efforts to solve the problems of a Member State, without awaiting external intervention.

The reaction of Africans — that is, to take control — whenever the international community shirks its responsibilities is not new. It will be recalled that when the horrendous genocide began in Rwanda, the United Nations forces sent to Rwanda to maintain peace were the first to leave the country when that peace was disturbed — at the precise time when the defenceless population needed protection. The international community having been unable to shoulder its responsibilities, a group of Rwandese, determined to save their country, managed to bring a halt to the massacres and to re-establish the rule of law. This shows that Africa can solve its own problems thanks, on the one hand, to citizens mobilized and determined to do so and, on the other, to regional and subregional organizations which the Africans themselves have established.

My delegation is pleased to note that the Abuja Agreement is being fully implemented and that the Council of State of Liberia has shouldered its responsibilities, particularly through its current efforts to extend the authority of the National Transitional Government throughout Liberia.

My delegation supports the Secretary-General's recommendation on the implementation of a programme to demobilize combatants, in cooperation with the National Transitional Government. It is essential that the demobilized soldiers be given productive work immediately upon demobilization, because soldiers who cannot find the means to earn a living could take up activities that could undermine the restored peace.

Along the same lines, my delegation considers it imperative and urgent that the refugees, displaced persons and former combatants be returned to their home communities in the interior of the country so that the peace process, still so fragile and in need of consolidation, will not be stopped.

The Security Council must express its gratitude to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and, through it, to the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), which fulfilled a mission that the Council, falling into the trap of double standards, did not wish to undertake. Indeed, the funds necessary for ECOMOG's operations for one year are less than those used in one week by the peace-keeping forces in the former Yugoslavia.

Why the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and why not ECOMOG? Who in this Chamber can publicly explain the difference? This is why Rwanda wishes to reiterate yet again its appeal to the Security Council and the Secretariat to resolve African problems only through Africa's own institutions, for the effect would be greater and the costs less.

In the light of the African continent's economic situation, regional and subregional organizations need

only material and moral support in order to carry out better the tasks that States have assigned them.

For more than two years the Council has been dealing with the subjects of Somalia, Rwanda and Liberia. These three countries have in common the features of poverty and instability, two evils that are intertwined and that cannot be resolved independently of each other. No one wants to say so, because no one wants to resolve these problems in integrated fashion.

We cannot ensure peace and stability in Somalia, Rwanda and Liberia without ensuring economic development in those countries. This rule is not just for Africa; it is universal, which is why my delegation invites the Security Council to take a different approach and turn its attention to other issues that cannot be skirted if we are to ensure peace and stability in African countries.

A "Marshall Plan" for Somalia, Rwanda and Liberia is not only possible and feasible, it is necessary and even indispensable in order to help these countries get back on their feet. We are not talking here of humanitarian assistance, but, rather, of economic cooperation. The national budgets of these countries are smaller than the budgets of most average-sized cities in the developed countries represented here. What the international community needs is good will and fairness.

Neglecting Africa, as is demonstrated by the current tendency to provide incomplete solutions for the continent's problems, may have adverse consequences not only for African countries but also for neighbouring continents. In resolving African problems satisfactorily, the other continents that are Africa's partners will at the same time be resolving many of their own problems.

My delegation would like to conclude by congratulating the President of ECOWAS, Mr. Jerry Rawlings, President of Ghana, and the Presidents of the States members of ECOWAS for having harmonized and coordinated their policies regarding Liberia and for having found an appropriate solution to that country's problems.

The President: I thank the representative of Rwanda for his kind words addressed to me. I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Oman.

After six years of devastating civil war, the news from Liberia is good and encouraging. The signing of the Abuja Agreement two months ago opened a new window of opportunity for a lasting solution to the Liberian conflict, for it provided for and resulted in, *inter alia*, the re-establishment of a comprehensive cease-fire, the installation of a new Council of State, and an agreed timetable for the implementation of that Agreement, from cease-fire to election.

It is gratifying to note that thus far, the cease-fire is generally holding, the new Council of State has shown encouraging signs of cohesion and the Liberian parties appear more determined than ever to take real steps towards the restoration of peace and stability in their country.

Much of the credit for these positive developments goes to the Liberian people themselves, for they have worked long and hard in pursuit of peace and stability for their country. A great deal of it also goes to the States members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which, through the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), have borne the brunt of maintaining peace and security in Liberia. The harmonization and coordination of their policies regarding the Liberian conflict have finally paid dividends.

We would like to take this opportunity to commend ECOWAS. However, much remains to be done if the Liberian peace process is to remain on course. The warring factions have yet to grapple with the cease-fire violations, the slow pace of disengagement of forces and the integration of the former combatants into civilian life, which is, to use the Secretary-General's language,

> "critical to the success of the peace process" *(S/1995/881, para. 44)*.

While the success of the peace process will depend primarily on the good will of the Liberian parties, the international community clearly has an important role to play. International support and assistance are essential in ensuring that the peace process in Liberia becomes irreversible. In this context, we welcome the convening of last month's pledging conference for Liberia. We sincerely hope that the funds pledged there will help put the country on the path of recovery.

Turning to the resolution we have just adopted, my delegation welcomes the adjustment made to the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), as well as the Mission's new concept of operation, given that a lot of water has passed under the bridge since the formulation of the Mission's original mandate in resolution 866 (1993). It is only right and

proper that the new mandate reflects new realities on the ground, especially the latest positive developments.

Finally, we commend the Secretary-General, his Special Representative and UNOMIL for their tireless efforts in assisting the Liberian people to bring about peace and stability in their country.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Mr. Ayewah (Nigeria): My delegation was touched by the sensitivity of those who made comments about a reported incident in my country. However, I would like to place on record that the Nigerian delegation takes strong exception to the comments made by certain members of the Council, led by the British delegation, over a decision taken, after due process, by the Government of Nigeria in the exercise of its sovereignty.

The Nigerian delegation wishes to remind those delegations that have ascribed to themselves the role of the world's policemen to kindly note that what reportedly took place in Nigeria earlier today, in relation to the subject of their comments, bears no relevance to the item under consideration in the Council.

The Nigerian delegation therefore finds it unacceptable for those members to meddle in Nigeria's domestic affairs. We regard this as gross interference in our internal affairs.

The President: There are no further speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.